



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2007

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Attorney General McGraw Warns Parents of Lead Contents In Kid's Toys and Jewelry

The Consumer Protection Division of the West Virginia Attorney General's office advises parents, grandparents and other caretakers of young children to be particularly alert to the danger of lead in children's toys and children's jewelry.

Some toys and jewelry have been found to contain levels of lead that can pose a serious threat to children's health. Caregivers are advised that they should carefully check their child's toys and jewelry for lead. Some signs to look for are:

Dull, grey looking metal pieces that feel heavy for their size regardless of color as these may be a thin veneer of paint, colored metal or plastic covering the lead;

Pieces which leave a grey mark when rubbed on a sheet of paper;

Bright colors particularly orange and red; and

Bendable toys or soft plastics which may use lead as a softness stabilizer.

BE PARTICULARLY CAUTIOUS OF METAL TOY JEWELRY SOLD IN VENDING MACHINES.

Young children are at greater risk for exposure to lead due to putting objects in their mouths and by putting their hands in their mouths after handling toys and jewelry which contain lead. Lead can interfere with brain development causing a permanent reduction in I.Q. and behavioral problems.

If you believe your child has been putting lead jewelry or toys in his or her mouth or has otherwise been exposed to lead, see your health provider. There is no safe level of lead in one's blood. There are often no symptoms but some symptoms associated with lead poisoning are:

- Appetite loss
- Abdominal pain
- Constipation
- Fatigue
- Sleeplessness
- Irritability and headache.

Of course, these symptoms can be due to causes unrelated to lead exposure.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is studying this problem and has a list of toys and jewelry recalled due to lead content. Its web address is www.cpsc.gov. Look for “recalled products.” The search can be simplified by limiting it to “toys” and “jewelry.” A direct link to this website and a list of other recalled products may be found on the Attorney General’s website at <http://www.wvago.gov/alerts.cfm>

If you see a child chewing or sucking on a toy which has been recalled or tested positive for lead contact your health provider and consider a blood test for lead.

If you child swallows any toy or other object you should immediately contact the West Virginia Poison Control Center at (800) 222-1222. The Center has a very informative website found at www.wvpoisoncenter.org.

Lead test kits for home use are available in some stores and via the internet which allow testing of any item to which your child is exposed to be tested.

Anyone becoming aware of toys or jewelry containing lead should report the same to the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection hotline at 1 (800) 368-8808.

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